

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN/CR:MMBOVA

APPROVED BY S/S-DMACK

ARA/CEN-MWEISSMAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 115505

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT SAN JOSE 2320 ACTION SECSTATE 10 MAY 76

QUOTE

S E C E E T SAN JOSE 2320

STADIS

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: CASC/CS, PSXR, PGOV (VESCO, ROBERT)

SUBJECT: VESCO CASE: WILKINS' ARREST

REF: SAN JOSE 2302

1. CONSUL HAD INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY
CHARPENTIER AT 9:15 A.M. ON MAY 10 FOR PURPOSE OF RAISING WITH
ME HIS MINISTRY'S APPARENT DISREGARD IN WILKINS CASE FOR

CONSULAR CONVENTION PROVISION ON CONSUL'S RIGHT TO BE IMMEDIATELY
INFORMED OF ARREST OF U.S. CITIZEN AND RIGHT TO PROMPT PRIVATE
ACCESS TO PRISONER.

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WM MINISTERS FIRST REACTION WAS THAT HE HAS BEEN COOPERATING

FULLY WITH FBI AND DEA TO RETURN TO U.S. FUGITIVE FROM U.S. LAW, BUT THAT HIS COOPERATION WOULD CEASE IF EMBASSY INSISTED ON STRICT ADHERENCE IN THIS SPECIAL CASE TO A CONVENTION WRITTEN IN 1926 (SIC). HE REITERATED THAT THE CONVENTION WAS NOT STRICTLY FOLLOWED ONLY BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THIS PARTICULAR CASE BUT THAT IT HAS BEEN AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE FOLLOWED IN OTHER CASES.

3. THE MINISTER THEN SAID THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER KNEW ABOUT THE WILKINS CASE AND HAD CALLED HIM SUNDAY EVENING, MAY 9, TO TELL HIM TO SPEAK WITH AMBASSADOR TODMAN ON MAY 10. MINISTER SAID HE WOULD CALL AMBASSADOR TODMAN ON MAY 10. MINISTER CHARPENTIER OMAN STATED THAT WILKINS (WHOSE NAME HAD NEVER ACTUALLY BEEN MENTIONED BY ANY GOCR OFFICIAL PREVIOUSLY) HAD COVHLA ED# A DECLARATION IN WHICH HE ADMITTED TO BEING SENT BY THE USG TO COSTA RICA FOR THE PURPOSE OF KILLING ROBERT VESCO. CHARPENTIER SAID THAT ONCE HE HAD THE DECLARATION IN HAND HE WOULD MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE AMBASSADOR TO SHOW IT TO HIM. CONSUL REVEALED NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF VESCO ASPECT OF THIS CASE.

4. THE MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT WILKINS HAS STATED IN THE DECLARATION THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO SEE THE U.S. CONSUL. (THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THIS HAS BEEN SAID TO THE CONSUL, AND IS NOT SUBSTANTIATED EITHER BY INITIAL NOTSZ#FROM WILKINS OR BY SECRET INFORMATION RECEIVED SEPARATELY).

5. THE MINISTER FURTHER STATED THAT THE VESCO PEOPLE WANTED A COPY OF THE DECLARATION BUT THAT HE WOULD NOT GIVE THEM ONE BECAUSE OF HIS OWN DEEP FEELING VOCARINO) BOTH FOR AMBASSADOR TODMAN PERSONALLY AND FOR THE USG.

6. MINISTER AGAIN PRESSED CONSUL AS HAVE OTHER OFFICIALS EARLIER TO KNOW HOW EMBASSY FIRST LEARNED OF WILKINS' ARREST. CONSUL REPLIED THAT WE RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE "STREET".

7. COMMENT: THE MINISTER MAINTAINED THE SAME LINE PREVIOUSLY TAKEN BY LOWER OFFICIALS. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME VESCO'S NAME HAS BEEN MENTIONED TO CONSUL OPENLY.

8. DESPITE MINISTER'S ASSURANCES, IT IS VIRTUAL CERTAINTY
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THAT VESCO HAS COPY OF WILKINS' DECLARATION. GIVEN VESCO'S CONTROL OF TWO NEWSPAPERS, A TELEVISION STATION AND THREE RADIO STATIONS, HE WILL HAVE RELATIVELY FREE HAND IN DECIDING WHEN AND HOW TO USE INFORMATION PUBLICLY.

9. WE ARE AWAITING MP ISTER'S CALL ON AMBASSADOR.
TODMAN
B

UNQUOTE
KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

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